***Othello***

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**Act One – analysis, model answers and essay questions**

***Literary Vocabulary***

***– Learn these, learn how to identify them, analyse them and interpret them***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Language*** | ***Form*** | ***Structure*** |
| * Imagery: metaphors, similes & personification, conceits
* Repetition
* Alliteration & sibilance
* Onomatopoeia
* Symbolism & motifs
* Hyperbole
* Overstatement , understatement & litotes
* Irony, sarcasm and satire
* Pathetic fallacy
* Bathos
* Ambiguity
* Antithesis
* Colloquial language
* Assonance and consonance
* Euphemism
* Euphony
* Oxymoron
* Pathos
* Pun
* Periphrasis & verbosity
* Rhetorical language
* Connotation
 | * Types of genre eg sonnet, blank verse
* The shape of the text on the page
* Paragraphs, stanzas, verses
* Line length
* Speech and dialogue
* Stage directions
* Monologue & soliloquy
* Punctuation
* Enjambment and end stopped lines
* Marked caesurae
* Rhythm and metre
* Rhyme
* Narrative technique and perspective
* Prosodic and paralinguistic features when acting a drama
* Vignette
* Allegory
 | * What is positioned where and why (in terms of content)
* Sentence structure
* Beginnings and endings of texts
* How do the ideas lead up to the finale or resolution of the text?
* Reader manipulation by positioning of details eg shock ending?
* Repetition
* Juxtaposition
* Order of scenes or chapters and the effect this creates
* Flashbacks
* Proleptic irony
* Authorial Intervention
* Dramatic irony
* Stage directions
* Aside
* Props
* Ethos
* Logos
* Pathos
* Different narrative perspectives.
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***Reading and Close Analysis: The First 42 lines***

### ACT I

### SCENE I. Venice. A street.

*Enter RODERIGO and IAGO*

**RODERIGO**

Tush! never tell me; I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.

**IAGO**

'Sblood, but you will not hear me:
If ever I did dream of such a matter, Abhor me.

**RODERIGO**

Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate.

**IAGO**

Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him: and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:
But he; as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion,
Nonsuits my mediators; for, 'Certes,' says he,
'I have already chose my officer.'
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practise,
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus and on other grounds
Christian and heathen, must be be-lee'd and calm'd
By debitor and creditor: this counter-caster,
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I--God bless the mark!--his Moorship's ancient.

**RODERIGO**

By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

**IAGO**

Why, there's no remedy; 'tis the curse of service,
Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affined
To love the Moor.

**RODERIGO**

I would not follow him then.

**IAGO**

O, sir, content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:

Read the first 42 lines of the play

**Activity One: Discuss**

What is going on in this first section of the play?

How does Iago’s preoccupation with “promotion’ fit with our understanding of Elizabethan society and the situations in Venice and Cyprus when the play was set?

***Summarise the findings of your discussion in a personal, revision friendly way. I.e.:***

* Mind map
* Visual/pictures
* Diagram
* Bullet points

**Activity Two:**

***Group One***

*Roderigo’s character*

How does Shakespeare use language and structure to shape our understanding of Roderigo in this section of the play?

**Key Words:**

Simile, declarative sentences, metaphor

***Group Two***

*Iago’s character*

How does Shakespeare use language and structure to shape our understanding of iago in this section of the play?

**Key Words:**

Simile, declarative sentences, metaphor, expletives, juxtaposition, rhetorical question, irony

***Group Three***

How does this opening section of the play fit with our expectation of a Shakespearian tragedy?

**Key Words:**

Anything from the Shakespearian tragedy section!

***Group Four***

How does Shakespeare use language and structure to shape or response to the relationship between Iago and Roderigo?

How would you characterise the relationship between Iago and Othello?

What first impression do you have of the absent hero from this section?

**Homework: keeping track**

What are you reading to contribute to your wider reading this year for Literature? What are your reading targets for this month? E.G. Read a chapter a day, 20 pages per day, finish Captain Corelli’s Mandolin in one month….

I’m reading……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

My target is:……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

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**Literary Terminology Quiz.**

* Next lesson, you will be tested on the Language column of the Literary Vocabulary table. You will need to be able to:
* Define key literary vocab
* Spell Lit vocab correctly
* Be able to identify Lit Vocab techniques within a passage

**First Writing Assessment**

Read the first 42 lines of Othello and respond to the following:

How does Shakespeare present ideas of loyalty and friendship in this passage? Examine the view that, in this passage and elsewhere in the play, Iago is presented as a tragic antagonist determined to destroy Othello.

* Remember to respond with a clear focus on assessment objectives
* SQUAD paragraphs (with quotations and clear reference to techniques used by Shakespeare)
* Social and Historical contextual awareness
* Some consideration of the rest of the play
* FOCUS on the extract and close analysis of the extract

**What is a SQUAD paragraph?**

The ingredients of a SQUAD paragraph:

S = Statement

QU = Quotation

A = Analysis

D = Develop

*How does Shakespeare present ideas of loyalty and friendship in this passage? Examine the view that, in this passage and elsewhere in the play, Iago is presented as a tragic antagonist determined to destroy Othello.*

The first scene in “Othello” is perhaps most notable for the non-appearance of the eponymous protagonist. The tragic hero's absence from the opening scene allows Shakespeare the freedom to introduce Iago, the antagonist of the play, and his villainous characteristics.

The opening lines of dialogue immediately establish Iago's reputation as a disreputable and untrustworthy character with Roderigo's admonishment over Iago's freedom with Roderigo's money. Roderigo's simile "Who hast had my purse/As if the strings were thine," shows a level of trust bordering on gullibility and establishes immediate questions in the minds of the watching audience about the balance of power in the relationship between the two characters.

As Iago rants in his extended speeches (perhaps reflecting where the true status and power lie) about the unfairness of Cassio's promotion, his impassioned expletives "s'blood' and ironic descriptions of Cassio "Nor the division of a battle knows/More than a spinster;" reveal Iago’s contempt for his superiors, the metaphor of the 'spinster' in Elizabethan times would reflect the disdain in society for single, innocent women unworthy of the benefits of masculine care and provision through marriage. By alluding to Cassio’s lack of experience on the battlefield with this negative female stereotype, Iago consigns Cassio to the lowest echelons in society.

The traditions of the Shakespearean tragedy are honoured as the audience develops a growing concern for the absent Othello and the revenge that Iago seems determined to seek through the play. This sequence of lines successfully foreshadows later events where aspects of Othello’s hamartia can be attributed to his misplaced trust in the utterly and openly untrustworthy character the audience have been introduced to at the beginning of the play.

Iago reference to Othello as "his Moorship's" is a clever, ironic blending of Moor and Lordship, reflecting Iago's disdainful view of a man to whom he should pledge loyalty. This phrase is perhaps an honest reflection of ironic attitudes to a black man during the Renaissance; however, a contemporary audience would expect more loyalty within the ranks and military hierarchies of the play. Finally, the coining of a new word also displays Iago’s formidable skills as a wordsmith, an attribute which also foreshadows later events in Othello’s downfall and hint at Iago’s role as the external pressure pushing the tragic hero towards the fatal conclusion of the play

The final part of this extract reveals to the audience Iago’s intentions as he informs both us and Roderigo of his desire to "follow him to serve my turn upon him:", the echoing of "him" accompanied with the juxtaposing images of loyalty and revenge provide the dramatic irony which will underscore the remainder of the play.

**Looking at your own response in comparison with the response above and using the assessment objectives to help, set yourself a clear set of 3 targets which are SMART, to improve future assessment. SMART = Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time related.**

Targets:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

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**The Remainder of Act One**

*Pre-reading:*

**Adjacency Pairs:** Usually, in a polite exchange, there are set patterns in speech. A question is usually followed by an answer, a greeting followed by a greeting, call followed by response. These are called **adjacency pairs**. When reading the remainder of Act I, look at how and when Shakespeare disrupts the “polite exchange rules” of adjacency pairs and consider WHY – how is Shakespeare shaping our response?

**IAGO**

We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For nought but provender, and when he's old, cashier'd:
Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them and when they have lined
their coats
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am

**Pair/Share**

* *What sort of characters does Iago respect/disrespect?*
* *What does he admit of his own character? How does create dramatic irony?*
* *How does this scene link with a build up towards the tragic genre of the play*

**RODERIGO**

What a full fortune does the thicklips owe
If he can carry't thus!

**IAGO**

Call up her father,
Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
As it may lose some colour.

**RODERIGO**

Here is her father's house; I'll call aloud.

**IAGO**

Do, with like timorous accent and dire yell
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

**RODERIGO**

What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

**IAGO**

Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

*BRABANTIO appears above, at a window*

**BRABANTIO**

What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

**RODERIGO**

Signior, is all your family within?

**IAGO**

Are your doors lock'd?

**BRABANTIO**

Why, wherefore ask you this?

**IAGO**

'Zounds, sir, you're robb'd; for shame, put on
your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is topping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

**BRABANTIO**

What, have you lost your wits?

**RODERIGO**

Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

**BRABANTIO**

Not I what are you?

**RODERIGO**

My name is Roderigo.

**BRABANTIO**

The worser welcome:
I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors:
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
To start my quiet.

**RODERIGO**

Sir, sir, sir,--

**BRABANTIO**

But thou must needs be sure
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

**RODERIGO**

Patience, good sir.

**BRABANTIO**

What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;
My house is not a grange.

**RODERIGO**

Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

**IAGO**

'Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not
serve God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to
do you service and you think we are ruffians, you'll
have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse;
you'll have your nephews neigh to you; you'll have
coursers for cousins and gennets for germans.

**BRABANTIO**

What profane wretch art thou?

**IAGO**

I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter
and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.

**BRABANTIO**

Thou art a villain.

**IAGO**

You are--a senator.

**BRABANTIO**

This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

**RODERIGO**

Sir, I will answer any thing. But, I beseech you,
If't be your pleasure and most wise consent,
As partly I find it is, that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported, with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor--
If this be known to you and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit and fortunes
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and every where. Straight satisfy yourself:
If she be in her chamber or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.

**BRABANTIO**

Strike on the tinder, ho!
Give me a taper! call up all my people!
This accident is not unlike my dream:
Belief of it oppresses me already.
Light, I say! light!

*Exit above*

**IAGO**

Farewell; for I must leave you:
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produced--as, if I stay, I shall--
Against the Moor: for, I do know, the state,
However this may gall him with some cheque,
Cannot with safety cast him, for he's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
Which even now stand in act, that, for their souls,
Another of his fathom they have none,
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains.
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;
And there will I be with him. So, farewell.

*Exit*

*Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with torches*

**BRABANTIO**

It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!
With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father!
How didst thou know 'twas she? O she deceives me
Past thought! What said she to you? Get more tapers:
Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think you?

**RODERIGO**

Truly, I think they are.

**BRABANTIO**

O heaven! How got she out? O treason of the blood!
Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

**RODERIGO**

Yes, sir, I have indeed.

**BRABANTIO**

Call up my brother. O, would you had had her!
Some one way, some another. Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

**RODERIGO**

I think I can discover him, if you please,
To get good guard and go along with me.

**BRABANTIO**

Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;
I may command at most. Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night.
On, good Roderigo: I'll deserve your pains.

*Exeunt*

**Activity One: Discuss**

What is going on in this Act I Scene I of the play?

How would you describe Iago’s relationship with Othello, Roderigo, Cassio, Desdemona and Brabantio in this scene?

How does Shakespeare use the language, form and structure of the first act and scene to influence audience response?

How does our understanding of the social and historical context of the play influence our reading and interpretation of Iago´s actions towards Othello and Desdemona (use other critical opinion – formulate your own FIRM response)

***Summarise the findings of your discussion in a personal, revision friendly way. I.e.:***

* Mind map
* Visual/pictures
* Diagram
* Bullet points

**Activity Two: Preparation for timed Assessment**

1. How does Act One, Scene One of “Othello” establish the genre of the play?
2. How does the language, form and structure of the scene help formulate character?
3. Is Iago clever, cunning and admirable or malevolent, treacherous and vile? How is our reading of Iago influenced by our 21st Century interpretation?

***Plenary Doughnut***

*Tell each other about most interesting/exciting/valuable insight on the following in Act One Scene One:*

* Brabantio
* Othello
* Iago
* Roderigo
* Techniques use by Shakespeare
* Tragic genre
* Social context race and gender

Homework: Vice!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice\_(character)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_%28character%29)

# Vice (character)

**Vice** is a [stock character](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stock_character) of the [medieval](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval) [morality plays](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morality_play). While the main character of these plays was representative of every human being (and usually named Mankind, Everyman, or some other generalizing of humanity at large), the other characters were representatives of (and usually named after) personified virtues or vices who sought to win control of man's soul. While the virtues in a morality play can be seen as messengers of God, the vices were viewed as messengers of the Devil.

Over time, the morality plays began to include many lesser vices on stage and one chief vice figure, a tempter above all the others, who was called simply the Vice. Originally, the Vice was a serious role, but over time his part became largely comical. Scholar F.P. Wilson notes, “Whatever else the Vice may be, he is always the chief comic character”; this comic portrayal is explained thus: "In theory there is no reason why vice should not be put upon the stage with the same seriousness and sobriety as virtue: in practice, however, dramatists, and many a preacher, knew that men and women will not listen for long to unrelieved gravity”.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_%28character%29#cite_note-1) In his*Declaration of Popish Impostures* from 1603, Bishop Harsnet wrote that "It was a pretty part in the old church plays, when the nimble Vice would skip up nimbly like a Jacke-an-apes into the Devil's necke, and ride the devil a course, and belabour him with his wooden dagger, till he made him roar, whereat the people would laugh to see the Devil so Vice-haunted.”

## Characteristics of the Vice

The Vice can be an [allegoric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory) representation of one of the [Seven Vices](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice) or a more general portrayal of [evil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evil) as the [tempter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temptation) of [man](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human). Vice often takes the audience into complicity by revealing its evil plans, often through soliloquies or monologues.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_%28character%29#cite_note-2) Its enacting is frequently [comic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comedy) or [absurd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Absurdity).

## Origins of the Vice

The word "vice" is derived from [Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) *vitium* "defect, offence, blemish, perfection," in both physical and verbal senses. The character of the Vice developed from that of the domestic fool or jester some tincture in the later plays supplied from the mischief-making servants in Plautus and Terence.

Other ancestors of the vice are the devils and the vices in earlier moralities, from the comic characters in the folk play—the ancestors of the Morris fool, the fool of the Mummer’s play, the clown of the Sword play; from the medieval sermon, not merely from its ‘characters’ of the seven deadly sins and their representatives in contemporary life but from its jests and satirical bent; from the plotting servants of Terence and Plautus; from the creative zest of the actors speaking more than was set down for them.

## Later Developments of the Vice

The Vice character developed into the [villain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villain) in [Renaissance theatre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Renaissance_theatre). [*Richard III*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_III_%28play%29) in [Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakespeare)'s drama of the same name links himself with the Vice when he declares:

“Thus like the formal Vice, Iniquity, / I moralize two meanings in one word” *(III.i.82–83)*

Other examples of the Vice in Renaissance theatre include Iago (who plays up the more villainous aspects of the Vice) from *Othello* and Sir John Falstaff (who plays up the more comic aspects of the vice) from *Henry IV, Parts*[*1*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_IV%2C_Part_1)*and*[*2*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_IV%2C_Part_2) and [*The Merry Wives of Windsor*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Merry_Wives_of_Windsor)

**From: Pioneer Shakespeare:  From Classic Morality Play Tradition to *Macbeth***

## <http://www2.cedarcrest.edu/academic/eng/lfletcher/macbeth/papers/ksteiner.htm> Kaitlin Steiner, 2006

The Vice character, although slow to change, was also the character to undergo the most literary and contextual changes.  The quality of the Vice in the Morality plays is what truly set them apart from other plays and in part what has made the Morality plays so appealing and successful during their reign.  The Vice character went through many changes, both physical and symbolic, from the time of the early Moralities to the time of Shakespeare’s writing.   As previously stated, the early Vice character was given simply-stated allegorical names such as “Death” or “Sin” and was man’s ultimate tempter, engaging in constant temptation of man and struggle for his soul.  Due to the fact that most of the early Morality plays were extremely Christian in nature, the Vice character most often represented evil incarnate—not the Devil, per se, but a servant or extension of a Devil figure whose eminently evil nature was fundamentally enough to justify his wishes to destroy mankind.

With the onset of the Renaissance, the “stage conflict between the Vices and Virtues was a thing of the past” (George 28).    The plays became a lot less sermon-like, the characters moving from allegorical in nature to actual characters with human names and attributes.  They ceased to be metaphors.  The plays became less about eternal after-life salvation and more about “being brought to earthly justice,” (George 30) the mindset of the hero dramatically shifting, “and his concern was now the world” (George 30).  George also comments that “the playwrights were beginning to put evil where it really exists—in the mind of man.  By the time of the Tudor Interludes, the Vice character was becoming a man with an evil nature, and his old allegorical name and nature were being concealed” (28).

With the shift away from religion- and moral-centered thinking from the Medieval to the Renaissance periods, the Vice character changed from an “outward manifestation of evil to an inward one” (George 8).  He steps out of from behind his metaphorical mask and into the clothes of an everyday man, appealing to then-modern audiences who found themselves engaged in plays that no longer read like church but like popular theatrical entertainment, though the plays still retained a moral undertone.  Playwrights were able now to bend the character of the Vice to fit a wider range of roles to which the Vice was easily fitted for and manipulated.  He was called “half man, half metaphor” (George 30) because of the excellent ability his multi-faceted personality allowed him, easily able to change modes in order to play the various roles playwrights desired.  The Vice was a two-sided character, possessing two faces or two natures, and “his two-fold nature allowed him to take an active position in both comedy and tragedy” (George 80).

“The Vice was the means through which the tediousness of the moral lesson was broken” (George 16).  In fact, most of the appeal of the Vice character wasn’t his evil nature, but the way in which he tricked the hero and “[carried] out his plans” (George 4).  The audience was intrigued by the series of events playwrights would concoct and the ways in which the hero would fall, tragic.  The Vice character typically would blame the hero’s downfall on the hero himself, not taking much, if any, responsibility for the matter (George 40).  Much often was the case in which the Vice character would provide the comic relief for the play as well and the Vice character, according to George, ended up in the later Morality plays becoming two types of Vice characters stemming from a hybrid-Vice character:  the “comic-hybrid vice” and “villain-hybrid vice” (George 47).

The comic-hybrid vice was, as suggested by name, the more comical of the two, never intending much harm, being more of a teasing and fooling nature than of a malicious one.  These were the characters such as Falstaff in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* (Parts I and II) and *Twelfth’s Night*’s fool Feste that provided the comic relief and amused the audience with their foolery and antics.  George commends that this was the character “noted for carrying out bawdy, rough antics” (48).  Shakespeare was the playwright who most influenced the development of the comic-hybrid vice, equipping the character with wit and merriment that provoked comical reaction from the audience.  He took the comic-hybrid vice from center stage and made him more of a background character that provided the comic relief through mocking and ridiculing the other characters (George 50).  Also, “Shakespeare did not allow his comic-hybrid Vice to dominate the play and control the action through scheming” (George 50) nor “are Shakespeare’s comic-hybrid Vice characters vicious; he leaves maliciousness to his villains” (George 51).

The villain-hybrid Vice was a character of a different breed entirely from the comic-hybrid Vice.  Not usually one for providing comic relief, the villain-hybrid Vice was malicious in nature and inherently evil—he most often had no motive for his actions and genuinely delights in the turmoil he causes.  George calls the villain-hybrid Vice “a designing monster whose outstanding characteristics lie in his ability to plot evil by means of deceit and in his relative lack of motive for doing so” (59).  The character of Iago in Shakespeare’s *Othello* is a perfect example of a villain-hybrid Vice--the embodiment of the concealed evil in a Vice character. Unlike the allegorical Vice characters of the early Morality plays, Shakespeare creates a Vice who hides his dual, diabolical nature behind a disguise of seeming goodness in order to trick Othello and damn his soul. Iago’s motives are only to destroy—mainly Othello, but also anyone else who should stand in his way.

What is typical of all Vices, old or new, is that they feel “no pain and no remorse for the trouble [they cause]” (George 17).  Whereas the Vice character of the old Morality plays was a direct descendent of some religious evil, the Vice character of Shakespeare’s era was evil just to be evil.  The new Vice was seemingly “part man and part evil…[having] very little or no motive to justify the cause of the action he pursued” (George 49).  The majority of the time the character lacked any real oblige for wreaking the havoc that he does, and in all instances feels no obligation or responsibility to the pain and disruption that he has caused. “At will he causes discord…gulling victim after victim and causing friends to be at war against each other” (George 41).  Although the playwrights had considerable more flexibility to create a reason or a multitude of reasons for the Vice character’s disdain and seemingly irrational behaviour, most of the Vices were left without motive, perhaps much adding to the appeal of the character.

**Homework Task:**

Read the information on the character of Vice above. From your reading of “Othello” so far and your understanding of the play as a whole, how far would you agree that Iago is a stereotypical representation of “Vice”?

**Respond using any of the following:**

* Bullet points
* Short paragraph of continuous prose (300 words)
* Visual mind map or picture/cartoon
* Postcard

**Writing AssessmentTwo**

From Brabantio’s appearance to the end of Act One Scene One

**Read the passage and respond to the following:**How does Shakespeare present the dangers and oppositions to love in this passage?
Examine the view that, in this passage and elsewhere in the play, Iago is presented as a Renaissance “vice” character, determined to destroy Othello and the love between him and Desdemona

**Assessment Objectives**

AO1: 7 marks **AO1:** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

AO2: 6 marks **AO2**: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

AO3: 6 marks **AO3:** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

AO4: 3 marks **AO4**: Explore connections across literary texts

AO5: 3 marks **AO5**: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

**Writing Assessment Two: *Model response***

How does Shakespeare present the dangers and oppositions to live in this passage?

Examine the view that, in this passage and elsewhere in the play, Iago is presented as a renaissance 'vice' character, determined to destroy Othello and the love between him and Desdemona.

From Brabantio's entrance to the very end of Act One, Scene One, it is clear that Iago is a cunning and malevolent character. In many respects, he is a character whose origins lie in Mediaeval drama, the personification of 'Vice'. His attitudes towards Othello may be seen as representing stereotypes in Elizabethan England at the time, therefore the malevolence that a modern audience perceive in his character and despise, may have reflected the prejudices of Shakespeare’s era. The audience may indeed have experienced a mutual enjoyment in lago's deeds and words and perceive him less as a representative of 'Vice' and more of a representative of the prejudices common in the audience of the time as exemplified by Elizabeth’s own proclamation that she should banish “*the great number of niggers and blackamoors which are crept into this realm”*

For a modern day or Renaissance audience, it is clear that even if Iago is a more subtle character than mediaeval representations of Vice would be, he does embrace many of the characteristics of 'vice' in his use of language and his clearly evil intentions. The preceding scene has already established lago’s animosity towards Othello and this scene only serves to emphasise his role as the antagonist in this tragedy.

Iago's use of vivid animalistic imagery and his negative connotations regarding the sexual consummation of Desdemona and Othello's relationship are deliberately provocative and serve only to inflame the fatherly instincts of Brabantio. Iago's use of vivid juxtaposition of 'white ewe', connoting innocence and virginity, with the 'old black ram' deliberately provoke Brabantio's fatherly, protective instincts and remind him of the debt of loyalty owed him by his missing daughter. The repetition of negative sexual connotations with the metaphor of 'The beast with two backs' only serves to emphasise Iago's desire to inflame Brabantio's anger by emphasising prejudices about black men as animals. Thus, we as audience can surely see Iago as 'vice' as he demonstrates a clear disloyalty to his 'supposed' master. Even if an Elizabethan audience agreed with Iago's sentiments and prejudices regarding race, surely they would condemn the absence of loyalty within the clear military hierarchy.

Iago's monologue prior to his departure from this scene most clearly demonstrates his 'vice' like character as he admits to Roderigo that he will 'show out a flag and sign of love/ which is indeed but sign', the vivid irony of Iago using his military knowledge to explicitly convey his duplicity, to both Roderigo and the audience, foreshadows the tragedies ahead. Iago will continue to show deceitful 'signs' of love and loyalty to Othello whilst enjoying the tragic protagonist’s downfall. In fact Othello’s hamartia may be seen as his own gullibility in trusting Iago.

By the end of this scene, Iago has achieved his aims; he has created an initial chaos in the usually civilised Venice, the lack of adjacency pairings in the scene show lago's skilful manipulation of Brabantio and Roderigo with endless questions, explanations and dramatic assertions.  Brabantio's horror at his daughter’s illicit marriage is almost comedic as his earlier assertion to Roderigo that his 'daughter is not for thee' is juxtaposed a few moments later with (to Rodrigo) 'O, would you had had her'. Brabantio's preference for the foolish Roderigo over Othello reflects prejudices of the time in a comedic way but the emphatic search for Othello, laden '*with torches'* and Brabantio's speech littered with exclamations, once again foreshadows later tragic events.As the audience await the first appearance of the tragic hero, we are left full of admiration for Iago's cunning and fully aware of his 'vice' like characteristics. Ironically, as the play progresses, the noble Othello will not see the true colours if his foe until it is too late*.*

**Assessment Objectives**

AO1: 7 marks **AO1:** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

AO2: 6 marks **AO2**: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

AO3: 6 marks **AO3:** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

AO4: 3 marks **AO4**: Explore connections across literary texts

AO5: 3 marks **AO5**: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assessment ObjectiveWeighting | Your marks for the response above | Reasons for mark | Areas for improvement |
| AO1 7 marks |  |  |  |
| AO2 6 marks |  |  |  |
| AO3 6 marks |  |  |  |
| AO4 3 marks |  |  |  |
| AO5 3 marks |  |  |  |
|  |  | **TOTAL MARK** |
| What grade do you think this mark represents? |

 **Looking at your own response in comparison with the response above and using the assessment objectives to help, set yourself a clear set of 3 targets which are SMART, to improve future assessment. SMART = Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time related.**

Targets:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

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### SCENE II. Another street.

*Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants with torches*

**IAGO**

Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience
To do no contrived murder: I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

**OTHELLO**

'Tis better as it is.

**IAGO**

Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honour
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast married? Be assured of this,
That the magnifico is much beloved,
And hath in his effect a voice potential
As double as the duke's: he will divorce you;
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law, with all his might to enforce it on,
Will give him cable

**OTHELLO**

Let him do his spite:
My services which I have done the signiory
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,--
Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate--I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege, and my demerits
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come yond?

**IAGO**

Those are the raised father and his friends:
You were best go in.

**OTHELLO**

Not I I must be found:
My parts, my title and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

**IAGO**

By Janus, I think no.

*Enter CASSIO, and certain Officers with torches*

**OTHELLO**

The servants of the duke, and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends!
What is the news?

**CASSIO**

The duke does greet you, general,
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance,
Even on the instant.

**OTHELLO**

What is the matter, think you?

**CASSIO**

Something from Cyprus as I may divine:
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels,
And many of the consuls, raised and met,
Are at the duke's already: you have been
hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several guests
To search you out.

**OTHELLO**

'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you.

*Exit*

**CASSIO**

Ancient, what makes he here?

**IAGO**

'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack:
If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

**CASSIO**

I do not understand.

**IAGO**

He's married.

**CASSIO**

To who?

*Re-enter OTHELLO*

**IAGO**

Marry, to--Come, captain, will you go?

**OTHELLO**

Have with you.

**CASSIO**

Here comes another troop to seek for you.

**IAGO**

It is Brabantio. General, be advised;
He comes to bad intent.

*Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers with torches and weapons*

**OTHELLO**

Holla! stand there!

**RODERIGO**

Signior, it is the Moor.

**BRABANTIO**

Down with him, thief!

*They draw on both sides*

**IAGO**

You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

**OTHELLO**

Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.
Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.

**BRABANTIO**

O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For I'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound,
Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunned
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.
Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms,
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weaken motion: I'll have't disputed on;
'Tis probable and palpable to thinking.
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.
Lay hold upon him: if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

**OTHELLO**

Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest:
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?

**BRABANTIO**

To prison, till fit time
Of law and course of direct session
Call thee to answer.

**OTHELLO**

What if I do obey?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied,
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state
To bring me to him?

**First Officer**

'Tis true, most worthy signior;
The duke's in council and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

**BRABANTIO**

How! the duke in council!
In this time of the night! Bring him away:
Mine's not an idle cause: the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own;
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

*Exeunt*

### First impressions of Othello?

### How does Shakespeare shape our response to Othello in Act One Scene Two of “Othello”?

### Include:

* Clear personal interpretation (AO1)
* Consideration of genre (AO1)
* Shakespeare’s use of Language, Form and Structure in shaping audience response(AO1)
* Social and historical context (AO3)
* Other critical opinion (AO)
* SWEATY paragraphs (AO1)
* Alternative interpretations (AO)
* Key vocabulary – at least 20 words from the list below (Bold or underline in your response) (AO1)

Eponymous hero Antagonist Protagonist Metaphor

Simile Imagery Personification Tragedy

Iambic pentameter Rhyme Blank verse Irony

Dramatic irony Antithesis Foreshadowing Genre

Modern Feminist Renaissance Post-Colonial Elizabethan

Tragic Genre Fatal Flaw Noble and admirable hero Chaos/Disorder

External pressure Ordered society Sympathy (pathos) Hamartia